GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1934
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2003
DEATH BY EXPOSURE OF PESTICIDES
PRABODH PANDA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of farmers have died and thousands of farmers are suffering from various ailments in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala due to pesticides exposure during last cotton crop season;

(b) if so, the actual number of farmers who died and are suffering, State-wise;

(c) whether use of pesticides in cotton farming in India is alarming; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to contain the use of pesticides in cotton farming?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a): No, Sir. The State Governments of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Keralahave reported no death or suffering of farmers from various ailments due to pesticides exposure during last cotton crop season.

(b): Question does not arise.

(c): The use of pesticides in cotton is highest among all crops. However it is slowly declining.

(d): The Government has taken following steps to contain the use of pesticides in cotton farming:

(i) The Government has adopted Integrated Pest Management (IPM), encompassingcultural, mechanical and biological methods and need based use of pesticides, as the cardinal principle and main plank of plant protection in the country. 26 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres in 22 States and one Union Territory areimparting training to farmers and extension functionaries in IPM including safe and judicious use of pesticides. So far, 1560 Farmers Field Schools have been organizedthereby training 46,676 farmers and 6736 Agricultural Extension Officers in IPM in Cotton.

(ii) The Government is promoting the use of bio-pesticides. The guidelines for their registration have been simplified recently. Government also gives grants-in-aid to State Governments for establishing bio-control laboratories for production of bio- control agents.

(iii) FAO-EU Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme for Cotton in India is alsobeing implemented in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Punjab with a view to promote Integrated Pest Management in Cotton crop through Training of Facilitators and farmers.

(iv) The Government of India is implementing a Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC)for increasing the production and productivity of the cotton crop. The TMC includesgrants-in-aid for establishment of biological control laboratories for minimizing the use of chemical pesticides and training of farmers in Integrated Pest Management. Insecticides Resistance Management strategies are also being promoted under this programme to complement the efforts of Integrated Pest Management approach.